

NJ Wildlife Updates

For Licensing Agents and Fish & Wildlife Constituents

Volume 1, Issue 2 Published by the NJ Division of Fish & Wildlife

August 2000

Director's Message



Welcome to the second issue of *NJ Wildlife Updates*. Written especially for people with an interest in New Jersey's fish and wildlife, it is the Division's intent to provide our constituents

with the most timely and useful information possible regarding the issues surrounding these resources in one easy-to-read, regularly published newsletter.

This month will address Game Code changes, season dates, juvenile license information, upcoming bear hunting seminars and much

more. Also included and brand new this month is a special section entitled "Council's Corner" featuring information from the New Jersey Fish and Game Council. A regular offering, the "Corner" will provide the Fish and Game Council with a forum to highlight the latest wildlife issues and legislation, as well as provide meeting updates and other pertinent information.

Enjoy this issue and have a safe and pleasant summer.

Bob McDowell, Director

Highlights of Important Changes in the 2000-2001 Game Code

1. **Deer Hunting**—Licensed hunters may take only one antlered buck per season, regardless of how many permits are purchased for that season. The regulation applies to all seasons except the six-day firearm season.

- ◆ The fall bow season opens Monday, September 11, 2000* with only antlerless deer taken Sept. 11-29, 2000. Hunters who harvest an antlerless deer during this period will be eligible to harvest an antlered buck beginning Sept. 30.

* In "Earn-A-Buck" Zones ONLY

- ◆ A "Quality Deer Management" program will be implemented in Deer Management Zones: 3, 6, 9, 13, 27, 29, 35, 37, 59, 63, 66 and 67. If antlered deer are taken, they must have at least three points on one side during all seasons open in these zones.

- ◆ In certain zones, the permit muzzleloader season has been increased by five days & includes the six-day firearm season. During this season, hunters will have the opportunity to shoot two deer at once before going to the check station. On December 4-9, 2000 hunters must take only antlerless deer.
- ◆ The bonus tag designation has been eliminated. All tags will now be referred to as "NJ Supplemental Deer Transportation Tags."
- ◆ Hunters will again be required to harvest an antlerless deer first in all seasons except the six-day firearm season in Deer Management Zones 5, 7-14, 36, 38, 40, 41, 50, 51, 60 and 67.

(Consult the NJ Fish and Wildlife Digest for other changes and information).

(continued on next page)

2. **Small Game Season** will open on Saturday, Nov. 11 at 8 a.m.

3. **New Turkey Hunting Permits Starting Spring 2001**—"General Turkey Hunting Permit" allows the holder to hunt on both public and private parcels of land within a specific Turkey Hunting Area (THA). "Private Land Turkey Hunting Permit" allows holder to hunt only on posted privately owned lands within a specified THA.

4. **New Black Bear Hunting Season** includes three segments and two hunting areas.

- ◆ Segment 1: September 18 & 22, 2000. Includes all that area north of I-78 and west of I-287 for bow, muzzleloader rifle and shotgun-slugs only.
- ◆ Segment 2: September 30 - October 27, 2000 for bow only. Includes all that area north of I-195.
- ◆ Segment 3: December 4-9, 2000 for shotgun or muzzleloader rifle. Includes all that area north of I-195.

Hunting hours: 1/2 hr. before sunrise to 1/2 hr. after sunset.

Bag limit is one black bear of either-sex and any age per hunter per hunting segment. Check station is mandatory.

Baiting and shooting bears in dens is prohibited.

Hunting methods: still-hunting, stand hunting or drive hunting.

Legal weapons: Shotguns no larger than 10 gauge, no smaller than 20 gauge, rifled slugs only.

Muzzleloader rifles .50 caliber or greater.

Bows minimum draw 40 lbs., except compound bows (minimum peak weight of 40 pounds).

Season will be terminated upon reaching a harvest of 175 bears.

5. **Coyote season has been** extended to run concurrent with the fox season. No permit is required for either season.

6. The area code for the Division's Southern Region Office has changed to (856). Also, the DEP action hotline has changed to 1-877-WARN DEP or 1-877-927-6337.

| Calendar of Events | | | | | | |
|--------------------|----|---|--|--|----|----|
| 1 | 2 | Deer Application Period | | | 6 | 7 |
| | | June 1 Through Sept. 10 | | | | |
| | | Applications available at | | | | |
| | | Division offices and license agents. | | | | |
| 8 | 9 | Early Archery Deer Season | | | 13 | 14 |
| | | Opens September 11, 2000 | | | | |
| 15 | 16 | National Hunting & Fishing Day | | | 20 | 21 |
| | | Sept. 23 | | | | |
| 22 | 23 | NJ Fish and Wildlife Conservation Week | | | 27 | 28 |
| | | Sept. 24-30, 2000 | | | | |
| 29 | 30 | Governor's 9th Annual Surf Fishing Tournament | | | | |
| | | Sunday, Oct. 1, 2000 | | | | |
| | | 6:30 a.m. - 1 p.m. | | | | |
| | | Island Beach State Park | | | | |

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

The letter "A" before a bill number signifies a bill in the Assembly.

The letter "S" before a bill number signifies a bill in the Senate.

A2129, sponsored by Assemblywoman Connie Myers and Senator Robert Singer, was recently signed by the Governor. This bill gives the Fish and Game Council (Council) broader authority in preparing and approving community-based deer management programs.

The need for these programs stems from the fact that suburbanized deer populations are basically unhuntable in traditional terms. Current options available to communities are limited to hunting the deer during the deer seasons, controlled hunting, trapping and euthanizing, trapping and relocating to a deer farm or research facility, and the experimental use of fertility control materials which requires Food and Drug Administration (FDA) site approvals.

As part of the new law, municipalities, airports and groups of farmers may apply to the Division for a permit to conduct a deer control program. The applicant must develop a draft plan, with assistance from the Division if needed, and the municipalities where the plan is to be implemented must pass a resolution or ordinance in favor of the plan. The Division and the Council must approve the plan. The plan must address how the animals will be removed and indicate the number of animals taken, as well as offer a specific time frame. The applicant may request

exemptions to current law such as the use of rifles, suppressors, agents, and the ability to shoot across roads. Many plans will not include any of these exemptions to current law. The Council has the final say on which plans will receive an exemption and will only approve such an exemption if it believes that all public safety concerns have been addressed. For instance, the exemption to shoot across a road will be granted if, as part of the plan, the road is blocked to traffic during the plan's implementation.

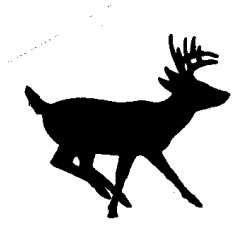
A1939, sponsored by Assemblywoman Connie Myers and Senator Robert Singer, was signed by the Governor on June 30, 2000. This law will provide \$95,000 to Northwest New Jersey Community Action Program (NORWESCAP) to continue the Venison Donation Program. Last year, hunters donated more than 50,000 pounds of venison to the program. The meat was distributed throughout the state to food banks to help feed the needy.

S1162, sponsored by Senator Louis Bassano, prohibits black bear hunting in New Jersey. This bill passed the Senate and has been referred to the Assembly Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee. This proposed legislation would prohibit black bear hunting for five years, but the Governor could override the moratorium during that time. If the Governor executes an order for a hunt, hunters would apply for permits through a lottery.

***For more information on the
New Jersey Division of Fish & Wildlife
visit our website at:***

www.state.nj.us/dep/fgw

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS



In this section of the newsletter we will respond to your requests for information about wildlife and the Division. We will also use this space to answer questions most often asked of Division personnel.

Q. What is "Quality Deer Management" and why is NJ implementing this type of management into their program?

A. Quality Deer Management (QDM) involves managing deer populations within the cultural and biological carrying capacity of a relatively large land area (at least 10,000 acres). Quality Deer Management programs protect yearling bucks (1 1/2-year-olds) so that they will reach 2 1/2 and 3 1/2 years of age, and targets adult females for harvest. Quality Deer Management programs stress deer quality over quantity. The *New Jersey Hunter Retention and Deer Hunter Satisfaction* survey conducted in 1998 indicated that 75 percent of New Jersey hunters would be "willing to give up the chance to shoot small-antlered bucks and shoot more does in exchange for an increased chance to shoot large-antlered bucks in later years."

Several special management areas and private areas have already implemented QDM programs in New Jersey, including Fort Dix Military

Reservation, High Point State Park and the Great Swamp National Wildlife Refuge. Other states, including Arkansas and Mississippi, have also experimented with QDM strategies. The Division bases its strategies on these combined experiences, as well as on programs related to timber company lands in the southeastern U.S.

Antler point restrictions are the simplest, most practical approach to increasing the number of male deer in the 2 1/2 and 3 1/2 year age classes. Consequently, **the Fish and Game Council has approved a two-year, *experimental* program with antler point restrictions. Specifically, antlered bucks taken in the designated zones must have a minimum of three points on one side** (Antler points are defined in the Game Code as being at least one-inch long and longer than wide at the base. Deer with broken, shed or antlers less than three inches in length are considered antlerless deer).

This restriction should protect a significant number of 1 1/2-year-old bucks, allowing them to be hunted in 2001 and 2002. Two study areas are included in the experiment. The northern experimental area will include **Zones 3, 6, 9 & 13**. The southern experimental area will include **Zones 27, 29, 35, 59 & 63**. The program is also expected to reduce the total deer population and create a more equal buck to doe ratio, and could be an alternative to the existing "Earn-A-Buck" Program.



Have a Question? Ask a Biologist...

If there is a specific fisheries or wildlife question/issue you'd like to see addressed, write to the: New Jersey Division of Fish & Wildlife, c/o Fish & Wildlife Updates Editor, P.O. Box 400, Trenton, NJ 08625-0400. Be sure to include your name and address so that a reply can be made. Of the questions received, several will be highlighted each month.

COUNCIL'S CORNER:

The Fish and Game Council is empowered by the legislature with the independent responsibility to adopt a Fish and Game Code. This Code provides for the protection and conservation of fish and wildlife and to oversee the "Hunter and Angler" fund, which supports these efforts.

Representation on this board includes all areas of the fish and wildlife constituency. Three members of the Council are farmers, recommended by the agricultural community; six members represent the sporting community and are recommended by the NJ State Federation of Sportsmen's Clubs; one is the Chairperson of the Endangered and Nongame Advisory Committee and one is a public member "knowledgeable in land use management and soil conservation practices." The three members from the agricultural community and the six from the sporting public are geographically divided and represent the northern, southern and central parts of the state.

The Fish and Game Council is vested with certain regulatory powers aimed at protecting and developing adequate populations of fish and wildlife for recreational and commercial purposes. Research results from Division of Fish and Wildlife biologists are provided to the Council to assist them in making determinations as to when and where in the state hunting and fishing shall occur, which freshwater fish, game birds, game animals and fur-bearing animals may be taken, and in what numbers. In addition, the Council supervises a program of wildlife propagation, the expenses of which are supported by fees for hunting and fishing licenses paid for by the sporting public.

FISH & GAME COUNCIL APPROVES BEAR SEASON

On June 25, 2000, the New Jersey Fish and Game Council approved changes to the 2000-2001 Game Code including the authorization of a New Jersey Black Bear Season to begin in the fall of 2000.

More than 185 individuals voiced their concerns favoring and opposing the bear hunt at a public hearing on June 6. Written comments were also submitted and considered. As a result of input offered from Governor Whitman and the public, the original season structure and objectives were modified.

The original season proposal, which outlined an initial target harvest of 350 bears, was modified to 175 as a result of concerns that the initial rate of reduction was too rapid. Due to the reduction in the harvest target from 350 to 175, the early September segment season dates were adjusted from one week to two days, spaced four days apart so that if the target harvest of 175 is reached on the first day there would be enough time to end the season before the second day.

"Although the original proposal of 350 bears would have reduced New Jersey's bear population, the new harvest target of 175 will at least slow the expansion of the bear population into new areas," said Fish and Game Council Chairman John Bradway. "The season will initiate a multi-year program that will eventually reduce the overall bear population to a level that assures their continued survival in the state and addresses damage and safety concerns of the public."

The Council also directed the Division of Fish and Wildlife to continue and intensify its educational efforts regarding black bears and to work with

interested organizations in developing and implementing a comprehensive education plan. In addition, the Council encouraged the Division to investigate the feasibility of alternative methods of population control as a potential element in a balanced approach to bear management.

"Individuals and groups opposed to the bear hunt have not provided any hard evidence that alternative methods for bear population control are feasible," Bradway said. "The reality is that other than sport hunting, there are no approved drugs or proven-effective methods to reduce free-ranging bear populations. It would take years to identify, test and implement alternative methods if they are found to be feasible with no guarantee that an acceptable option could be found. Considering the current rate of bear damage complaints, we feel it is irresponsible to allow the bear population to grow unchecked while alternative methods are explored. However, we firmly believe that all population control alternatives are worth investigating."

The Council directed the Division to continue and enhance its black bear research and monitoring activities, especially determining the effect of any control measures, including this year's hunting season. Council also encouraged the Division to continue and expand its professional bear response and aversive conditioning activities with appropriate local professionals.

"In 1999, the Division spent more than \$200,000 responding to bear problems and aversively conditioning bears, but the number of complaints still soared to more than 1,600. Aversive conditioning is a tool to help reduce the amount of damage and complaints. It is not the solution to the problem, but again, it is an important part of a balanced approach to controlling the bear problem," Bradway said.

17th Annual Waterfowl Stamp & Print-First in a New Landmark Series

The New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection's Division of Fish and Wildlife proudly presents the Habitat 2000 Landmark Series; the first collectible series of state duck stamp prints depicting waterfowl and public landmarks in the Garden State. As part of the Waterfowl Habitat 2000 Program to help preserve waterfowl and open space in New Jersey, the Division's Waterfowl Stamp Advisory Committee selected sites that were representative of public open lands where visitors can observe the species depicted in the print.

The series of three designs, featuring canvasbacks flying past the Statue of Liberty, tundra swans at Sedge Island and wood ducks at the Delaware Water Gap, were created by wildlife artists

and brothers Joe, Bob and Jim Hautman. The Hautmans were chosen for the uncompromising quality and expertise displayed in their artwork. These three brothers are the only siblings to ever win the prestigious Federal Duck Stamp Competition and since 1990, have won it five times!

The series will begin this year with New Jersey's 17th waterfowl stamp and print set created by the eldest Hautman brother, Joe. This set will feature canvasbacks flying past New Jersey's and America's most recognized landmark, the Statue of Liberty.

In addition to the Landmark Series prints, the Division has added two new products; a limited edition collector knife for each year of the series, plus a limited edition Habitat 2000 Souvenir

stamp card featuring three artist-signed stamps (one for each year of the series).

For more information on how to purchase a print, collector duck stamps or one of the new products, send a self-addressed,



stamped legal-size envelope to the: Waterfowl Stamp Advisory Committee, NJ Division of Fish and Wildlife, P.O. Box 400, Trenton, NJ 08625-0400 or visit the Division's website @ www.state.nj.us/dep/fgw and click on the products section.